

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in the application. New claim 9 has been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 1-5, 8, and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanshin (JP 2001-336407) in view of Voll (USP 4,713,704). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

(Claims 1-5 and 8)

In the Office Action, the Examiner states, in essence, that Sanshin discloses a switching mechanism switching operating characteristics of the intake/exhaust cam, but does not disclose the intake/exhaust side rocker shaft having a larger diameter than the exhaust/intake side rocker shaft. In deed, in Sanshin, the diameter of the intake rocker shaft and the diameter of the exhaust rocker shaft are the same.

Therefore, the Examiner relies on the Voll reference to show that it is known in the art to increase a diameter of a shaft that requires a higher stiffness. Voll, however, does not disclose or suggest that the diameter of one of the intake/exhaust rocker shafts, which is provided with a switching mechanism, is larger than the other.

In view of this, even assuming that Sanshin and Voll can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, one skilled in the art would, at best, merely modify one of the rocker shafts of Sanshin to have a diameter larger than the other, and would not be motivated to modify Sanshin, such that “the intake-side rocker shaft is provided with the switching

mechanism and has a larger diameter than the exhaust-side rocker shaft,” as recited in claims 1 and 8.

Claims 2-5, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

(Claim 9)

Similarly, even assuming that Sanshin and Voll can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to modify Sanshin, such that “the exhaust-side rocker shaft is provided with the switching mechanism and has a larger diameter than the intake-side rocker shaft,” as recited in claim 9.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claims 6 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanshin in view of Voll, and further in view of Konno (USP 5,553,584). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 6 and 7, indirectly dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

### Conclusion

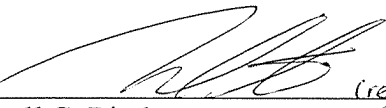
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: February 9, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

for By  (reg. # 40,417)  
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